

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 9-12 and 14 remain pending in the present application. Claims 4-8, 13 and 15 have been cancelled. Claim 1 has been amended. Basis for the amendments can be found throughout the specification, claims and drawings as originally filed.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1-4, 10, 12, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Claim 1 has been amended to overcome the rejections. Claim 4 has been cancelled. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-4, 10, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combined teachings of JP 11-254944 Yamaguchi (U.S. Pat. No. 5,899,262) and either one of Danieau ('733) or Danieau ('355). Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the prior art as applied to Claim 1 above, and further in view of JP 5-280802.

Claim 1 has been amended to define an edge of the opening and a grill member which are parallel to the sliding direction. The grill member is defined as being located at a center of the air passage. A first spacing between the door plate and the grill member is defined as being equal to or greater than a second spacing between the

edge of the opening and the door plate. This feature is discussed in the specification on page 23, beginning at line 7.

JP 11-254944 and Yamaguchi both disclose a structure which is similar to the structure of the present invention in that an air passage is divided by a grill member. Neither JP 11-254944 or Yamaguchi disclose, teach or suggest the dimensional relationship now defined in amended Claim 1 where the dimension between the door plate and the grill member is equal or greater than the dimension between the door plate and the edge of the opening parallel to the grid member. Danieau discloses springs 70 and 72 but Danieau also does not disclose the dimensional relationship now defined by amended Claim 1.

Thus, Applicants believe Claim 1, as amended, patentably distinguishes over the art of record. Likewise, Claims 2, 3 10, 12 and 14, which ultimately depend from Claim 1, are also believed to patentably distinguish over the art of record. Claims 4 and 15 have been cancelled.

REJOINDER

Applicants respectfully request the rejoinder of withdrawn Claims 9 and 11. Both Claims 9 and 11 are dependent claims which depend from Claim 1 and which properly further limit Claim 1 and are thus believed to be entitled to rejoinder.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that all of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request

that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw all presently outstanding rejections. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. Thus, prompt and favorable consideration of this amendment is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (248) 641-1600.

Respectfully submitted,

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